

(9) 10.
TWO
LETTERS

FROM

Mr. MONTAGU

To the

L^d Treasurer;

One of the 11th, the other of the
18th of Jan. 167⁷/₈

Which were read in the

HOUSE of COMMONS.

Together with the

Lord Treasurer's SPEECH in
the HOUSE OF PEERS, upon an
Impeachment of High Treason, &c.
brought up against his Lordship by the
House of Commons, Decem. 23. 1678.

L O N D O N,

Printed, and are to be sold by Jonathan Edwin, at the
Three Roses in Ludgate-street. 1679.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTEN LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION

500 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N. Y.

1891

1891

1891

1891

1891

1891

1891

Mr. MONTAGU's
FIRST
LETTER.

Paris. Jan. II. 1678

My Lord,



Have not had the Honour of any from your Lordship, in Answer to all those, wherein I gave you the best account I could of matters here, by the Express I sent. Nor indeed could I expect his Majesty could take any sudden resolution in matters of so great moment.

The occasion of my giving you this trouble, is, to give you the best light I can into the reason of Mr. *de Ruigny's* Sons Journey into *England*, who will be there perhaps as soon as this Letter. If his Father's age would have permitted it, I believe they would have sent him; so they have chosen the Son, who is to make use of Lights his Father will give him, and by the near relation he hath to my Lady *Vaughan*, who is his Cousin-German, and the particular Friendship which Fa-

ther and Son have with Mr. *William Russel*, he is to be introduced into a great commerce with the Malecontented Members of Parliament, and insinuate what they shall think fit to cross your Measures at Court, if they shall prove disagreeable here: Whilst Mr. *Barillon* goes on in his smooth civil way.

I thought it my duty to his Majesty, to give your Lordship this account, though I have not explained this matter so much in my Letter to the Secretary; wherefore I hope you will let this be seen by none but his Majesty. What I know farther of this, or any thing else, you shall always be acquainted with. They are here in great pain, till it be known what will become of the Parliament, and do not stick to say, If that be put off for a month, they doubt not of a Peace. I am with all respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient and humble Servant,

R. Montagu.

Mr.

(5)

Mr. M O N T A G U ' S.

SECOND

LETTER.

Paris. Jan. 18. 167 $\frac{7}{8}$

My Lord,

SINCE I sealed up my Letter, by my Lord *Dunblane*, I have had one with me that is very exactly, as can be, inform'd of most things here, and hath told me the reason of *Ruvigny's* Journey.

His chief Errand is, to let the King know, that the King of *France* did hope he was so firm to him, as not to be led away by the Grand Treasurer; who was an ambitious man, and, to keep himself well with the people, would gratifie their inclinations by leading his Master unto an unreasonable War against *France*. That as for money, if he wanted it, he should have what he would from hence.

His instructions are, if this does not take, by the means of *Will. Russel*, and other discontented people, to give a great deal of money, and cross all your measures at Court.

When he gives you his Fathers Letter of Recommendation:

mendation, you cannot chuse but be very kind to him, since the chief part of his journey is to do you so good offices. My Lord, if I might be worthy to give my advise, who see things upon the place, there could be nothing better done, then after he hath been two days in *England*, for the King to give you order to tell Monsieur *Barillon*, that he knows *Ruvigny* hath a Relation and Commerce with people ill affected to the Government ; and would be therefore glad to have him retire. You cannot imagine how it would damp them here, when they shall see their little tricks do not pass upon us.

And old *Ruvigny*, that values himself upon knowing *England*, and having saved so much money as he had (by what I told you formerly) order to give, hath given it them for a Maxim, That they must diminish your Credit, before they can do any good in *England*. But since their chief quarrel to you is, the being so true to your Masters Interest, I am sure he is too just to let them do you any hurt.

If the King is for a War, you know what to do ; if he hearkens to their money, be pleased to let me know what they offer, and I dare answer, to get our Master as much again: for *Barillon's* orders are to make the market as low as he can. I am, &c.

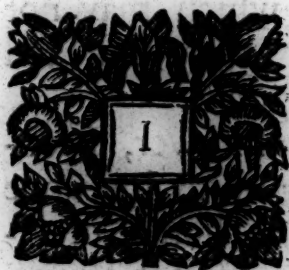
R. Montagu.

The

THE
LORD TREASURERS
S P E E C H

In the House of PEERS, upon
an Impeachment of High-Treason, &c.
brought up against his Lordship by the
House of Commons. Decem. 23. 1678.

My Lords,



Hope you will not enter upon any other business before you have given that liberty to me, which is the priviledg of every Peer, to be heard upon any accusation that is brought against him, though of far less moment than what hath been newly read against my self.

I confess I should have heard this charge with horror, if the matter of it had been true; but I thank God, I know my innocency to be so great, that it protects me from all sort of fear, but that of lying under so black a Character; as may be believed by those that cannot hear my defence; though I have the confidence to think that it is not truly believed in the hearts of the greatest part of those that have been informed against me.

I must

I must needs confess that I thought my self the last man in this Kingdom that should ever have been in danger of being accused for Treason, because I know no man that abhors it more, and that would pursue it more vigorously than my self, against any that should be guilty of it. Nay to such a degree is my Detestation of that Crime, that were I sure the dearest Child I have were guilty of it, I would willingly be his Executioner.

My Lords, I know this is not the time for me to enter regularly upon my defence, because I know your Lordships will first order me a Copy of my Charge, and appoint me a time for my Vindication; when I doubt not but to do it to the full satisfaction of your Lordships and of all the World. In the meantime I will only beg leave to observe to your Lordships, that those Articles in this Charge which can seem to have any thing of Treason in them, have their Answer so obvious, that there is very little in them which may not be answered by many others as well as my self, and some of them by every man in the Kingdom.

The first, which is the assuming Regal Power, I confess I do not understand; having never in my life done any thing of great moment, either at home, or relating to Foreign matters, for which I have not always had His Majesties Command. And although I am far from having been the most cautious man in taking care for my own security, (which perhaps my great innocence hath been the cause of) yet I have not been so wanting of common prudence, as in the most material Things not to have had His Majesties Orders and Directions under His own Hand, and particularly for the Letters now made use of against me.

The second I think doth scarce need my giving any
answer

answer to; it being obvious, that the Army was no more raised by me, than by every Lord in this House: And who-ever is in that Station which I hold, must certainly be a Fool, to desire any thing which creates a want of Money, especially so great an one, as the Charge of an Army must necessarily and immediately produce. And for one part of the Article concerning the Pay-Master of the Army, it is in fact otherwise; for security from the Pay-Master has been taken in the sum of four hundred thousand pounds.

The third is of the same nature with the first, and comes from the same foundation, which is, What a Gentleman hath thought fit to produce to the House of Commons. I will not now censure his action, I think it will do enough for its self; I will onely say, That although I take it for one of the greatest misfortunes which can befall a man, to lie under such a Charge of the House of Commons, yet I would much sooner choose to be under that unhappiness, than under his Circumstances.

The fourth Article is not onely false in every part of it, but it is not possible to believe it true, without my being the greatest Fool on Earth, as well as the blackest Villain. For were I capable of such a wickedness, yet the more wicked any man is, the more he is carried to his own interest; and is it possible any thing under Heaven can agree less with my Interest, than the destruction of this King? Can I possibly hope to be better than I am? and is it not apparent, that there is not one man living, whose happiness depends so much as mine upon the preservation of his Person?

My Lords, I know there is not a man in the world, that can in his heart think me guilty of that part of the Article, if I should say nothing to it. But besides, I

was so far from concealing this hellish Plot, that it is notoriously known, His Majesty sent me the first notice of it, together with Forty three Heads of the Information, before I knew a syllable of it from any body else: And it hath been own'd at the Bar of the House of Commons by him, (from whom onely I had the Intelligence) that he had all the encouragement and dispatch from me that I could give him. Besides, when it was disclosed to the Council-board, he told some of the Clerks of the Council, (as he had done me divers times before) that it would have been much better, and more would have been discovered, if it had been longer kept private. Besides this, I had the fortune to be particularly instrumental in seising Mr. *Coleman's* Papers, without which care, there had not one of them appear'd, and consequently, the best and most material Evidence which is yet of the Plot, had been wholly wanting. And certainly this is the first time that any man was accused to be the Concealer of that Plot, whereof he hath been a principal means of procuring the discovery.

For that part of the Article that says, I am Popishly affected, I thank God, that the contrary is so known to all the world, that even some of those that Voted against me, did own their knowledge of the falsity of that Allegation; and I hope I have through my whole life given so good testimony of my Religion, both in my own Family, and by my Services to the Church, (when-ever it hath lain in my power) that I shall not need much vindication in that particular: and I hope your Lordships will forgive me my weakness, in telling you, that I have a younger Son in the House of Commons, whom I shall love the better so long as I live, for moving to have that part of the Article to stand against me, that by that pattern it might appear, with what
 fort

fort of zeal the whole hath been carried to my prejudice.

The fifth Article will, upon examination, appear to be as ill-grounded as any of the rest; and I am sorry I am able to give one reason, which is, that I have known no Treasure in my time to waste, having entred upon an empty Treasury, and never seen one farthing given to His Majesty (in almost six years) that hath not been appropriated to particular uses, and strictly so applied by me, as the Acts have directed. And there hath not been one of those Aids which, in stead of giving the King Money, hath not cost him more out of his own Purse, to the same uses, as doth appear by the larger dimensions of the new Ships, and so in other things: insomuch that I take upon me the vanity to say, That by the Payments I have made to the Navy and Seamen, beyond former times; the paying off the greatest part of the Debt which was stopt in the Exchequer before my time; by my own punctuality in the course of Payments, and by other things which I am able to shew, I doubt not but to appear Meritorious instead of being Criminal upon that Article.

As to the sixth Article, which mentions my great Gettings, I cannot deny, but that I serve a Master, whose Goodness and Bounty hath been a great deal more to me than I have deserved, and to whom I can never pay Gratitude enough by all the Services of my life. But when the particulars of those Gettings shall appear, it will be found very contrary to what is suggested abroad; and that in near six years time in this Great Place, I have not got half that, which many others have got in lesser Places in half that time. And from the examination of this, which I desire may be seen, there will arise matter to accuse my prudence, in not having done for my Family what justly I might,

but nothing to arraign either my Honour, my Conscience, or my faithful Service to the Crown.

My Lords, if my obedience to the King shall not be my crime, I think nothing else will stick upon me from these Articles: For my own heart flatters me to believe that I have done nothing but as a true Protestant, and a faithful servant both to my King and Countrey. Nay I am as Confident, as that now I speak, that had I either been a Papist or Friend to the *French*, I had not been now accused. For I have reason to believe that the principal Informer of the House of Commons hath been assisted by *French* advice to this accusation; and if the Gentleman were as just to produce all he knows for me, as he hath been malicious to shew what may be lyable to misconstruction against me, or rather against the King (as indeed it is) no man could Vindicate me more than himself. Under whose hand I have to shew, how great an Enemy to *France* I am thought, how much I might have had to have been otherwise, and what he himself might have had for getting me to take it. But I do not wonder this Gentleman will do me no right, when he does not think fit to do it to his Majesty (upon whom chiefly this matter must reflect.) Although he knows, as will appear under his hand, that the greatest invitations to his Majesty for having money from *France*, have been made by himself; that if his Majesty would have been tempted for money, he might have sold Towns for as much as if they had been his own, and the money have been conveyed as privately as he pleased: That his Majesty might have made matches with *France* if he would have consented to give them Towns; and yet, that the King hath always scorned to yield the meanest Village, that was not agreed to by the *Spaniard* and *Hollander*. That Gentleman hath
often

often pretended how much his own interest in *France* was diminished, only by being thought my friend. And besides diverse other instances I have under his hand to shew the malice of the *French* Court against me, I sent two of his Letters to the House of Commons, which shew how Monsieur *Ruvigny* was sent hither on purpose to ruine me; which I am well assured at this time they would rather see, than of any one man in *England*. Besides what that Gentleman could say of this kind, (if he pleased) I hope his Majesty will give me leave (in my defence) to say in his Presence and in the hearing of diverse Lords, with whom I have the Honour to sit in the Committee of Foreign Affairs, that, which were it not true, his Majesty must think me the impudentest and worst of Men to affirm before him, That ever since I had the Honour to serve his Majesty to this day, I have delivered it as my constant opinion, that *France* was the worst Interest his Majesty could embrace, and that they were the Nation in the World from whom I did believe, he ought to apprehend the greatest danger: and who have both his Person and Government under the last degree of Contempt. For which Reason alone (were there no other) I would never advise his Majesty to trust to their friendship.

My Lords, tis my great happiness, that your Lordships are my Judges: whose Wisdom and Justice are so great, that you will both discern the truth of the Evidence when it shall come before you, and in the mean time distinguish truly, what the Crimes are (if they could be proved) and not what they are called. For this reason this House hath Wisely provided to have the special matter before them, to the end they may be satisfied whether the Charge have its right denomination; for otherwise it were to no purpose to desire special matter, unless.

unless it were to see whether the special matter alledged be what it is called. As for example, if a man were accused for having Traiterously passed the River in a pair of Oars, this is special matter, and stiled Treason by inserting the word Traiterously; yet your Lordships would not therefore proceed as taking it for Treason. So in this case, I beg for all your Lordships sakes as well as my own, that you will please to use that caution which will be necessary for all your Lordships safety and seats in this House: For I beseech your Lordships to consider, whither such a President may go hereafter? What the House of Commons may do in such a case, there is no Question but his Majesty may do the same by his Attorney; and what either of them may do against one Lord, they may do against more; (and we have seen it done in our days against all the Bishops at once.) Were it not very precariously then, that your Lordships hold your seats here, when by either of these ways, as many of your Lordships as for a time it might be Convenient to remove, should be at the mercy of having a thing called Treason, whether it be so or no.

Truly, my Lords, I have reason to believe that in the House of Commons, the matter of my Charge (if proved) was not thought to amount to Treason either by Statue or Common Law; and I hope your Lordships have too sad an Example in your memory, ever to assist the making of Treason by accumulation.

I should therefore not only wrong my own innocence, but the right of the Peers, to submit to answer matters of misdemeanour, as a Criminal in Treason.

My Lords, I wonder not at the malicious prosecution of those who would have me taken for what they truly are. For I am well assured, that neither the

French

French take me to be of their Interest, nor the Papists to be of their Religion: But I am troubled to fall under so severe a Censure of the House of Commons, although I cannot blame them, but my accusers who have so wrongfully informed them.

My Lords, I will conclude with this comfort, that I do not in the least apprehend the matter of my Charge under the security of your Lordships Justice; and will therefore trouble your Lordships no longer at this time, but only to pray your Directions, whether I am to withdraw, which I shall readily obey.

F I N I S.

I have been thinking of you
very much lately, and wondering
how you are getting on. I hope
you are well and happy. I am
feeling much better now, and
am able to do some of my
usual work. I am still a little
weak, but I am getting on.
I am sure you will be glad to
hear from me. I am sure you
will be glad to hear from me.
I am sure you will be glad to
hear from me. I am sure you
will be glad to hear from me.

21 MAY